
Amendments to the Claims

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application

1.-17. (Canceled)

18. (Currently amended) A chemically modified double stranded nucleic acid molecule, wherein:

- a) the double stranded nucleic acid comprises a sense strand and an antisense strand;
- b) each strand is 18 to 27 nucleotides in length, 18 to 23 nucleotides of each strand are complementary to each other, and at least 18 nucleotides of the antisense strand are complementary to a target RNA sequence; and
- c) the sense strand includes a terminal cap moiety at its 5'- and 3'-ends; ~~and the antisense strand optionally includes a terminal cap moiety at its 3' end, wherein said terminal cap moiety at the 3' end is a 4',5' methylene nucleotide, 1 (beta-D erythrofuranosyl) nucleotide, 1,5-anhydrohexitol nucleotide, L-nucleotide, LNA, threo-pentofuranosyl nucleotide, acyclic 3',4'-seco nucleotide, acyclic 3,4 dihydroxybutyl nucleotide, acyclic 3,5 dihydroxypentyl nucleotide, 3' 3'-inverted nucleotide moiety, 3' 3'-inverted abasic moiety, 3' 2'-inverted nucleotide moiety, or 3' 2'-inverted abasic moiety; and said terminal cap moiety at the 5'-end is a 4',5' methylene nucleotide, 1 (beta-D-erythrofuranosyl) nucleotide, 1,5-anhydrohexitol nucleotide, L-nucleotide, LNA, threo-pentofuranosyl-nucleotide, acyclic 3',4'-seco nucleotide, 3,4 dihydroxybutyl nucleotide, 3,5 dihydroxypentyl nucleotide, 5' 5'-inverted nucleotide moiety, or 5' 5'-inverted abasic moiety; and~~
- d) 10 or more pyrimidine nucleotides of the sense strand and antisense strand are chemically modified with 2'-deoxy, 2'-O-methyl, or 2'-deoxy-2'-fluoro nucleotides.

19. (Previously presented) The double stranded nucleic acid molecule of claim 18, wherein said double stranded nucleic acid molecule comprises no ribonucleotides.

20. (Previously presented) The double stranded nucleic acid molecule of claim 18, wherein said double stranded nucleic acid molecule comprises one or more ribonucleotides.

21. – 32. (Canceled)

33. (Previously presented) The double stranded nucleic acid molecule of claim 18, wherein one or more pyrimidine nucleotides present in the sense strand are 2'-O-methyl pyrimidine nucleotides.

34. (Previously presented) The double stranded nucleic acid molecule of claim 18, wherein one or more purine nucleotides present in the sense strand are 2'-deoxy purine nucleotides.

35. (Previously presented) The double stranded nucleic acid molecule of claim 18, wherein one or more pyrimidine nucleotides present in the sense strand are 2'-deoxy-2'-fluoro pyrimidine nucleotides.

36. (Previously presented) The double stranded nucleic acid molecule of claim 18, wherein one or more pyrimidine nucleotides present in said antisense strand are 2'-deoxy-2'-fluoro pyrimidine nucleotides.

37. (Previously presented) The double stranded nucleic acid molecule of claim 18, wherein one or more purine nucleotides present in said antisense strand are 2'-O-methyl purine nucleotides.

38. (Previously presented) A composition comprising the double stranded nucleic acid molecule of claim 18 and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier or diluent.

39. (New) The double stranded nucleic acid molecule of claim 18, comprising 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, or 10 phosphorothioate internucleotide linkages.